



Artist's Finance Guide

New Year, New You.
Make 2024 Your Year

VAA | Visual Artists
Association

Visual artists are professionals, and that's why they deserve an income that reflects their level of work.

Unfortunately, many artists are prone to underselling themselves, in the hopes that they will create more sales. Similarly, occasionally artists can inflate prices far beyond the common cost for similar work.

How can you find a middle ground where you are appropriately compensated for time, resources, and product? We've broken down the fundamentals of pricing artwork so that you can sell confidently in 2023.

'PRICE IS WHAT YOU PAY.
VALUE IS WHAT YOU GET.'

- Warren Buffett

Fundamentals of Pricing Artwork

Hourly Rate: All professions deserve a fair hourly rate. Make sure to include an appropriate hourly rate within your final price. So, if you want to earn £14 an hour, and a piece took 12 hours to make, to include your wage, the artwork must be sold at a minimum of £168.

Cost of Resources: The next step to pricing your artwork is considering the cost of your materials. Including canvases, the medium used, etc. The price of something like paint will be broken down for the amount of artwork you can create with a tube of paint. However, if you have been commissioned for artwork and this requires a new medium, this should be considered as part of the end price.

Competitors: This is essential when pricing your work appropriately. Do your research on any competitors or similar artists. Whatever they charge for their work, you should be looking to charge within a similar price bracket. Don't overestimate the demand for artwork like your own, however, try not to undersell your work.

Consistency: Once you have decided on a price make sure you remain consistent. This will encourage repeat sales and will reduce any complaints from buyers.

Variety: It may be beneficial to sell work at a variety of price points. This can make your work more accessible. Selling artwork at cheaper price points can simply include selling prints at a lower price than original artworks.

Commissions: Commissions may be priced slightly differently from pre-done artworks. This is because you likely will be working toward a brief, the more commissions you get the more you may want to charge for them. The higher you charge the fewer commissions you will receive, however, this will give you more time to focus on the ones you do gain, ensuring you create a high-quality product that is personalised to a specific brief.

Your Work is Valuable: Potential buyers often question why artwork is so expensive. This will happen no matter the price of your artwork. Have an answer prepared, consider the time and effort you put into your work. You are an exclusive artist and your work is of value. Be confident in the prices you are assigning to your work. If you aren't confident, then be ready to barter.

Taxes for Artists*

Self Employed, UK Taxes Only

Employment Status: Before you start to figure out your taxes, you need to figure out your employment status. You are able to be self-employed and employed at the same time. The HMRC has an online tool to help figure out employment status:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-employment-status-for-tax>

Register as Self-Employed: After figuring out your employment status you need to register as self-employed. For UK citizens this is done through HMRC. <https://www.gov.uk/log-in-file-self-assessment-tax-return/register-if-youre-self-employed>

Income Tax: When you're self-employed you pay income tax on your profits (not your total income, this excludes expenses). Tax brackets are broken down as follows:

- £0-£12,501: No Tax
- £12,501-£50,000: 20% Tax
- £50,001-£150,000: 40% Tax

Returns & Tax Due: Deadlines for tax returns submitted by paper is October 31st following the end of the tax year. The deadline for online returns however is 31st January. The 31st of January is also the deadline for paying any tax due. Delaying either of these can result in a fine or penalty.

Records: You should keep any records, receipts, and documents related to your business for six years as HMRC may want to examine them. HMRC are not very strict about bookkeeping. As long as you are thorough. It may suit you to make a simple spreadsheet when you are first starting out.

Self-Employed vs LTD: If your business begins to branch and you find yourself with several employees, it is a good idea to look at registering as an LTD. As self-employed you are responsible for your company's debts, a limited company is separate from your personal finances.

Contact Us

Visual Artists Association
85 Great Portland Street
London
W1W 7LT
United Kingdom

Email: hello@visual-artists.org
Phone: 0203 904 2600

Please direct any questions regarding this guide
to Max Kelly
Marketing Department
marketing@visual-artists.org